

Bronchopulmonary-Foregut Malformations: A Continuum of Paracrine Hamartomas?

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The bronchopulmonary-foregut malformations (BPFM) are usually sporadic, solitary cystic hamartomas involving conducting airways, arteries, venous drainage, and lung parenchyma. Transitional, compound hamartomas exist, and only their morphology is well-known. Between 1984–1994 we encountered and studied 10 unrelated patients and a stillborn infant with BPFM (out of 24,000 families). Ten were diagnosed in utero and one at birth as having congenital cystic adenomatoid malformation of the lung (CCAML). Postnatally, two diagnoses (20%) were corrected to bronchogenic cyst (BC) and diaphragmatic hernia, respectively. Bilateral lung involvement was present in 1 patient, and in 2 there was a considerable macroscopic regression of the hamartoma. Histologic studies of the six resected CCAML confirmed the diagnosis and implied dysregulated paracrine growth with its cellular and extracellular growth factors, protooncogenes, oncogenes, cytokines, cell-adhesive molecules, and receptors of these regulatory peptides, and their complex interactions as developmental morphogens in time and space. Am. J. Med. Genet 68:12–17, 1997

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INTRODUCTION

The congenital bronchopulmonary-foregut malformations (BPFM) [Gerle et al., 1968; Heithoff et al.,

1976] are predominantly cystic hamartomas [Van Dijk and Wagenvoort, 1973; Graham et al., 1987], i.e., developmental tumor-like malformations involving all four components of the bronchial tree: conducting airways, arteries, venous drainage, and lung parenchyma [Clements and Warner, 1987; Luck et al., 1986; O'Rahilly and Muller, 1984]. Their name refers to their endoderm-mesenchyme derivation and their frequent association with anomalies of the gastrointestinal tract, diaphragm, and pulmonary and systemic arterial/venous systems [Leithiser et al., 1986; Gerle et al., 1968]. As determined by their chronogenetics, i.e., the developmental timetable of the components of the bronchial tree [Luck, et al., 1986; Reid, 1984], they occur during blastogenesis with continuing changes beyond week 16 of fetal development [Stovin, 1985; Luck et al., 1986; O'Rahilly and Muller, 1984]. They appear to be a continuum [Blesovsky, 1967; Demos and Teresi, 1975; Sade et al., 1974; Gerle et al., 1968], although in reports four fairly distinct types, congenital cystic adenomatoid malformation of the lung (CCAML), extra- and intralobar pulmonary sequestration (PS), congenital lobar overinflation (CLO) [Coran and Drongowski, 1994], synonymous with congenital pulmonary lobar emphysema, and bronchogenic cyst (BC), are discussed.

In addition, there are numerous reports of transitional and compound hamartomas with histologic findings of at least two of the four types [Aulicino et al., 1994; Coran and Drongowski, 1994; Demos and Teresi, 1975; Ng et al., 1994; Sakala et al., 1994; Zangwill and Stocker, 1993]. The compound lesions show overlapping clinical manifestations, despite morphologic distinctiveness of the participating hamartomas [Budorick et al., 1992; Demos and Teresi, 1975; Moerman et al., 1992; Zangwill and Stocker, 1993; Dolkart et al., 1992], while the four types have clinical and radiological/sonographic signs and symptoms that allow diagnostic differentiation without histologic studies. Most of these malformations are solitary, nonhereditary, and with normal chromosomes; yet they have been reported with trisomies 18 and 21 [Moerman et al., 1992; Levkoff et al., 1964; Bromley et al., 1995] and with 47,XXY [Revillon et al., 1993], in monozygotic diamniotic twins [Moerman et al., 1992; Rebarber and Mohan, 1992; Harper, 1992; Sandoz, 1907; Bromley et al., 1995], with monogenic traits such as urogenital dysplasia [Moerman et al., 1992] and brachymorphism-onychodysplasia-dysphalangism syndrome [Verloes

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et al., 1993], and with other hamartomas, Jadassohn sebaceous nevus [Sweeney et al., 1994], nephromegaly [Graham et al., 1987; Scully et al., 1985; Weinberg and Zumwalt, 1977], and renal cysts [Graham et al., 1987; Conway, 1951; Roloff et al., 1971]. In Proteus and basal-cell nevus syndromes there have also been pulmonary hamartomas resembling BPFM [Cohen, 1993; Totten, 1980]. Similar hamartomas have been reported with the oculoauriculovertebral spectrum [Bowen and Parry, 1980], with congenital heart defects [Lacina et al., 1981; Nishibayashi et al., 1981; Sakala et al., 1994], with diaphragmatic hernia [Miller et al., 1980; Luet'ic et al., 1995; Ryan et al., 1995], and with esophageal and jejunal atresias [German et al., 1976; Birdsell et al., 1966]. An assortment of major anomalies including facial clefts, hydrocephaly, and neural tube defects was found in several of 132 patients with BPFM [Thorpe-Beeston and Nicolaides, 1994].

There are several reports of familial BPFM [MacRae, 1947; Sandoz, 1907; Krous and Sexauer, 1981]. CCAML is the most frequently diagnosed pulmonary hamartoma in utero [Heydanus et al., 1993; Petit et al., 1987; Boulot et al., 1991; Rebarber and Mohan, 1992; Revillon et al., 1993; Sakala et al., 1994; Kuller et al., 1992], and may be the most common postnatal lesion [Coran and Drongowski, 1994; Bailey et al., 1990; Cloutier et al., 1993; Richards et al., 1992; Revillon et al., 1993]. On histologic examination, three types of CCAML have been delineated [Stocker et al., 1977], and recently, based on the site of the defect in the tracheobronchial tree, Stocker [1994] expanded his classification to five types, with types 0 and 4 being exceedingly rare. Traditionally, Roman numerals are used to designate the types, though Arabic numerals are also used. Renal agenesis/dysplasia is the most commonly associated anomaly with CCAML type 2 [Petit et al., 1987; Zangwill and Stocker, 1993; Neilson et al., 1991; Krous et al., 1980], and CCAML has been reported with prune-belly syndrome [Kuruvilla et al., 1987; Weber et al., 1978; Sakala et al., 1994; Wilson et al., 1978]. Currently, the aforementioned statements are universally accepted, yet it took over a century from the initial reports of the hamartomas [Bartholinus, 1687; Rokitsansky, 1861; Rektorzik, 1861; Stoerk, 1897], and as many as 40 hypotheses for their origin and pathogenesis [Savic et al., 1979; Gerle et al., 1968; Biancalana, 1963], along with the use of numerous synonyms [Clements and Warner, 1987; Carter, 1969], for conceptual agreements to be reached. However, several aspects, particularly in regard to cause and pathogenesis, still require better understanding. Also, a forgotten issue, i.e., possible malignant degeneration of these hamartomas [Sheffield et al., 1987; Korol, 1953; McKusick and Fisher, 1958; Stephanopoulos and Catsaras, 1963; Krous and Sexauer, 1981; Weinberg et al., 1980; Benjamin and Cahill, 1991; Ribet et al., 1995], should remain in focus as relevant to the pathogenesis and comparable degeneration of hamartomas in other conditions/phakomatoses [Kousseff, 1992, 1995]. A review of the pathology of these malformations, with emphasis on pathogenesis in conjunction with analysis of 10 unreported patients and a stillborn infant with CCAML, should contribute further

knowledge about the pulmonary hamartomatous malformations and hamartomas in general [Kousseff, 1990, 1992].

MATERIALS, METHODS, AND RESULTS

Between January 2, 1984–October 31, 1994, through the University of South Florida Regional Genetics Program, 10 unrelated patients and a stillborn infant with BPFM were encountered and studied (Table I). They were among the 24,000 families evaluated during this period through the clinical and prenatal sections of the program. Seven were males and 4 females, and 4 of them (3 males and 1 female) had trypsin Giemsa-banded karyotypes; all were normal. Nine patients were of adequate size for gestational age, with 2 born prematurely, and 2 were large for term-gestation. The ethnic distribution of the patients was 8 Caucasians, 2 African-Americans, and 1 Hispanic. Ten of 11 were diagnosed prenatally during the second or third trimester by level II fetal sonography as CCAML, at a mean of 20.5 weeks of gestation (range, 17–26 weeks). Two of 10 (20%) were misdiagnosed, patient 9 had a BC at birth, and patient 10 had a left diaphragmatic hernia instead of CCAML. In patients 2 (Fig. 1) and 3 there was macroscopic regression of the CCAML (20%), and at birth both patients were asymptomatic with unremarkable chest radiograms. In 7 patients the hamartomas were on the left, in 2 they were on the right, and in patient 5, a stillborn, fetal sonograms showed left upper and lower lobes CCAML type 1; at autopsy an additional small CCAML type 1 was found in the right middle lobe. More than one ipsilateral lobe was involved in 3 patients. Patient 9 with BC had two needle-cyst aspirations in utero, and amniography in this patient did not show a communication with the gastrointestinal tract. Abruptio placentae and placenta praevia were each encountered once (patients 6 and 7). In two pregnancies there was gestational class A₁ diabetes mellitus, and one of these infants, patient 11, was large for gestational age without anomalies other than CCAML. Patient 7 was diagnosed at birth.

There was a mediastinal shift in 9/11 patients, and at birth 6/10 had tachypnea and dyspnea. In 2/6, extracorporeal membrane oxygenation (ECMO) was utilized. Patient 10, with diaphragmatic hernia, benefited from it, while patient 6 developed massive bilateral intraventricular hemorrhage with subsequent hydrocephaly, ventriculoperitoneal shunt, and considerable developmental delay. Other pulmonary/thoracic anomalies included lung hypoplasia and pneumothorax in 2/11 each, and pulmonary hypertension, thoracic asymmetry, and pectus excavatum in one each. Hydrops with polyhydramnios was present in 2/11: one (patient 5) was stillborn, and the other (patient 11) did well after lobectomies. Five of the 10 liveborn patients needed lobectomy, and one (patient 10) had his left diaphragmatic hernia repaired. The long-term results of the surgeries were excellent. Histologic studies of the five excised CCAML and the autopsy of the stillborn confirmed the preoperative diagnoses; 2 showed CCAML type 1, and 4 showed CCAML type 2. As expected, type 1 showed multiple large cysts communicating with the

TABLE I. Summary of Sonographic and Clinical Manifestations*

Patient no.	Type of hamartoma	Age at diagnosis	Presentation	Outcome
1.	CCAML 2, left UL, LL	17 wk, US	MS, RD	Well after lobectomy
2.	CCAML 1, right UL, LL	20 wk, US	Asymptomatic	CCAML regression
3.	CCAML 1, left LL	18 wk, US	Asymptomatic	CCAML regression
4.	CCAML 2, left LL	19 wk, US	MS, asymptomatic	Well after lobectomy
5.	CCAML 1, left UL, LL, right ML	25 wk, US	MS, polyhydramnios, anasarca	Stillborn
6.	CCAML 2, left LL	19 wk, US	MS, RD	ECMO, IVH, hydrocephaly, RD
7.	CCAML 1, left UL	Birth	MS, RD	Well after lobectomy
8.	CCAML 2, right LL	18 wk, US	MS, RD	Well after lobectomy
9.	CCAML 2, left LL postnatally BC	20 wk, US	MS, asymptomatic	Well
10.	CCAML 2, left LL postnatally diaphragmatic hernia	26 wk, US	MS, RD	ECMO, well after hernia repair
11.	CCAML 2, right UL, ML, LL	22 wk, US	MS, polyhydramnios, RD, hydrops	Well after lobectomy

*UL, upper lobe; LL, lower lobe; ML, middle lobe; wk, weeks; US, ultrasound; MS, mediastinal shift; RD, respiratory distress; IVH, intraventricular hemorrhage; ECMO, extracorporeal membrane oxygenation.

bronchial tree of the affected lobe(s). A smooth or wrinkled glistening membrane lined the cysts. Microscopically, the membrane showed ciliated columnar-to-pseudostratified tall columnar epithelium overlying a thin-to-moderately-thick fibromuscular layer. The amount of elastic tissue was increased. Occasional clusters of mucogenic cells were present along the walls of the cysts or in the alveoli of the adjacent parenchyma. In type 2 there were multiple, evenly-spaced cysts that rarely exceeded 1.2 cm in diameter. The cysts communicated with the bronchial tree and contained air in the liveborn children. Smooth or wrinkled glistening mem-

branes lined the cysts. Microscopically, the cysts bore close resemblance to dilated terminal bronchials. They were lined with ciliated cuboidal-to-columnar epithelium overlying a fibromuscular layer. Elastic tissue was present. Mucus-secreting cells were not found. Occasional striated muscle fibers were encountered. None of the hamartomas showed malignant degeneration.

DISCUSSION

As is almost always the case, large series of new patients with rare anomalies/disorders lead to critical review of current knowledge about the anomalies, and

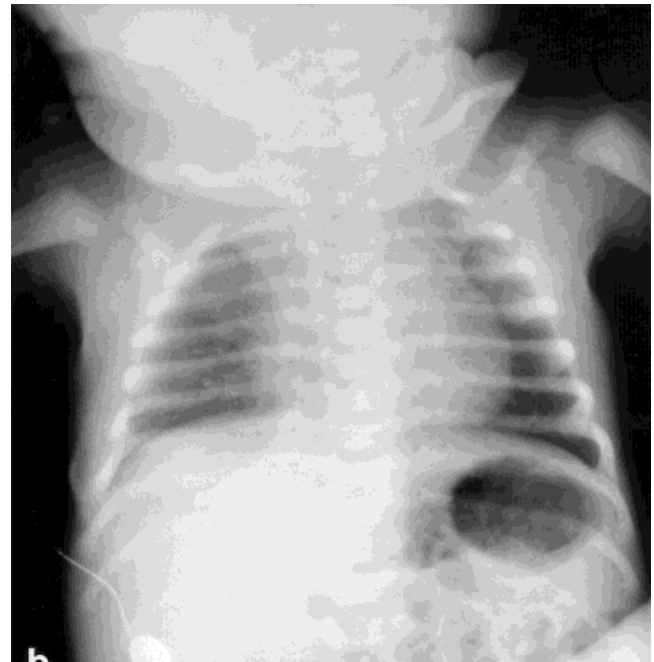
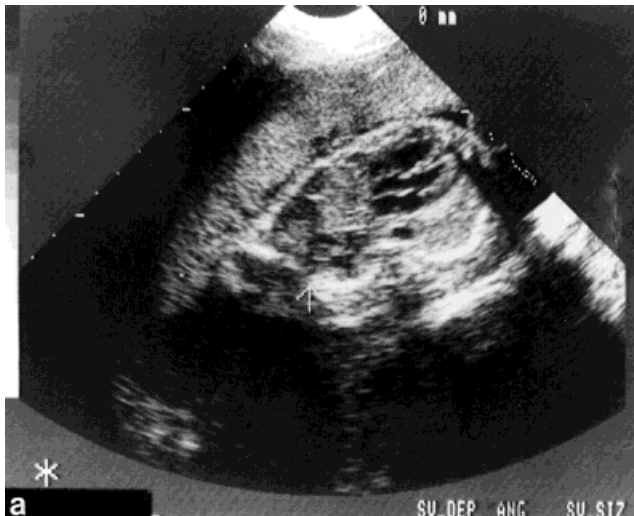


Fig. 1. Patient 2. **a**: Level II fetal sonogram at 28 weeks of gestation, showing right multicystic CCAML (arrow), measuring 2.8×2.3 cm; at 33 and 36 weeks the CCAML showed a regression in size, to $2.6 \times 2 \times 2$ cm and $1.4 \times 0.8 \times 0.5$ cm, respectively. **b**: Chest radiogram at birth. No evidence of CCAML.

an update with expansion of knowledge in order to better understand the pathogenesis. Indeed, the reported 10 patients and the stillborn with CCAML have allowed us to address unresolved issues such as spontaneous regression of CCAML/BPFM, unilateral vs. bilateral lung involvement, accuracy of prenatal and postnatal diagnosis, association with other anomalies/conditions, relevant clinical manifestations to short- and long-term prognosis, applicability of therapeutic modalities, and pathogenesis.

In 1983, progress in BPFM prenatal diagnosis led to the first report of spontaneous regression of CCAML in utero [Glaves and Baker, 1983]. Similar reports followed [Revillon et al., 1993; Heydanus et al., 1993; Kuller et al., 1992; Hatjis and Wall, 1992; McCullagh et al., 1994; Budorick et al., 1992], and as indicated by this series as many as 20% of hamartomas may show macroscopic regression in utero.

Even in recent reports [Cloutier et al., 1993], bilateral BPFM are still considered exceedingly rare. This was not so in this series, with 1/11 having bilateral CCAML 1, or in the extensive literature review [Miller et al., 1980; Meagher et al., 1993; Haddon and Bowen, 1991; Revillon et al., 1993; Petit et al., 1987; Neilson et al., 1991; Heydanus et al., 1993; McKusick and Fisher, 1958; Chao and Monoson, 1990; Schenck, 1937; Levkoff et al., 1964; Willius, 1937; Numabe et al., 1994; Murray et al., 1994; Walker and Cudmore, 1990; Rempen et al., 1987]. In other words, bilateral lung involvement should be anticipated and looked for.

In this study, an error in the prenatal diagnosis of BPFM occurred twice (20%). In patient 9, a BC at birth was diagnosed prenatally as CCAML type 2. Since he did not require postnatal lobectomy, it was impossible to determine whether or not the two prenatal needle aspirations had anything to do with the change of sonographic, i.e., macroscopic appearance of the hamartoma. Also, we do not know yet if the lesion communicates with the tracheobronchial tree as CCAML does, in contradistinction to a BC that should not have such communication [Nishibayashi et al., 1981; Bailey et al., 1990]. Patient 10, with left diaphragmatic hernia, was misdiagnosed as having CCAML type 2 by a single sonogram through our institution, and the lack of reevaluation is probably the source of the diagnostic error. The erroneous diagnoses in 20% of the patients underlie the necessity for cautious interpretation of initial sonographic findings and the need for reevaluations whenever a diagnosis of BPFM is suspected. In regard to prognosis and genetic counseling, a cautious approach was best for patient 11 as well. At 23 weeks of gestation this patient had extensive ipsilateral involvement of the lung, polyhydramnios, hydrops, and mediastinal shift. The unfavorable prognostic impression was conveyed to the family. However, the fetus reached term and with postnatal lobectomies did very well. In other words, caution again was the better part of valor, although our study did not indicate a need to avoid a type-specific prenatal diagnosis of BPFM, as has been recommended [McCullagh et al., 1994].

Since none of the studied patients had nonpulmonary/nonthoracic-associated anomalies, issue to such anomalies could not be taken. In the literature on associated

anomalies in BPFM there is a prevalence range from 12–26% [Thorpe-Beeston and Nicolaidis, 1994; Stocker et al., 1977; Cloutier et al., 1993], and there was a considerable ascertainment/selection bias in determining this range. However, there is a consensus that within BPFM types, extralobar PS and CCAML type 2 more frequently have associated anomalies [Cloutier et al., 1993; Savic et al., 1979]. Additional studies are needed if an accurate prevalence figure is to be obtained.

While in this study none of the histologic specimens showed malignant changes, the issue of malignant degeneration within BPFM remains important. Current practice of early postnatal lobectomies for hamartomas most likely accounts for the few recent reports of malignancies within BPFM [Murphy et al., 1991; Sheffield et al., 1987]. On the other hand, previous reports have shown that such degeneration is a part of the phenotype [McKusick and Fisher, 1958; Stephanopolous and Catsaras, 1963; Krous and Sexauer, 1981; Weinberg et al., 1980; Ueda et al., 1977; Korol, 1953; Womack and Graham, 1941; Huntington et al., 1963; Benjamin and Cahill, 1991; Ribet et al., 1995]. Ever since Korol [1953] found bronchogenic carcinoma in 9% of adult autopsies with BPFM of a particular type, “congenital cystic emphysema” vs. 1.5% in autopsies without BPFM, predilection to malignancies is considered established. Based on that, early resection of the hamartomas is recommended [Hedlund et al., 1989; Coran and Drongowski, 1994; Sheffield et al., 1987]. On the other hand, the in utero regression of BPFM precluding the necessity of lobectomy poses a dilemma, i.e., whether or not presumed remaining pulmonary microscopic changes require long-term monitoring for malignant degeneration and even prophylactic lobectomy. While most of the malignancies have been bronchogenic carcinomas [Korol, 1953; Huntington et al., 1963; Womack and Graham, 1941; Stephanopolous and Catsaras, 1963; Sheffield et al., 1987; McKusick and Fisher, 1958], just as in other hamartomatous conditions/phakomatoses [Kousseff, 1992] a variety of unusual rare malignancies has been reported: myxosarcomas [Ueda et al., 1977; Stephanopolous and Catsaras, 1963], rhabdomyosarcomas [Krous and Sexauer, 1981; Weinberg et al., 1980; Murphy et al., 1991], reticulosarcoma [Ueda et al., 1977], hemangiopericytoma [Krous and Sexauer, 1981], and mesenchymal sarcoma [Hedlund et al., 1989]. From the reports it is not clear how a benign developmental tumor-like lesion most likely due to dysregulated paracrine growth of differentiated mature cells and extracellular matrix (ECM) [Kousseff, 1992, 1995] switches to the autocrine growth mechanism responsible for the malignant degeneration. On the other hand, both mechanisms intertwine and are based on cell-to-cell communications and interactions through the various growth factors/regulatory peptides, their receptors, and the ECM.

As to pathogenesis, the fact that BPFM are congenital, sporadic, phenotypically-overlapping hamartomas, encountered in a number of different conditions, some chromosomal or hereditary, indicates that regardless of cause(s), dysregulated cell/ECM growth during embryogenesis plays a major pathogenetic role. The over/undergrowth of the lesions appears to be through

the paracrine growth mechanism, engaging through cellular transformation the autocrine growth mechanism in case of malignant degeneration. In other words, at cellular and ECM levels the hamartomas imply dysregulated paracrine growth, i.e., dysregulated growth factors, protooncogenes, oncogenes, cytokines, cell-adhesive molecules, the receptors of these regulatory peptides, and their complex interactions as developmental morphogens in time and space. Epidermal and insulin-like growth factors known to play a major role in lung development may be particularly pertinent to the pathogenesis of BPFM. The latter appear to represent a continuum of paracrine anomalies and in the near future, through immunocytochemistry, determination of RNA concentrations, in situ hybridization studies, and Northern blotting, a confirmation of their pathogenesis is expected.

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